

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 08 JULY 2007

You are listening to ZS6SRL the official Radio Station of the South African Radio League, the National Body for Amateur Radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin that is transmitted every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream or Echolink by ZS6FCS visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links for details. This, and previous bulletins, can be downloaded from the www.sarl.org.za. You can also read or download previous bulletins from there and subscribe to receive future bulletins by email.

This transmission is by Hans, ZS6KR, on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria with relays on 3,695, 10,135, 14,235 and 51,400 MHz as well as 438,825 MHz in the Pretoria area. (Other newsreaders please change to suit).

SILENT KEYS

It is with regret that we have to announce that the keys of two radio amateurs became silent recently. They are:

Llew Strydom, ZSL-0062, who passed away 15th June 2007. Our sincerest condolences to his spouse Pat, other relatives and friends.

Ossie Osborne, ZS1KP, passed away on Friday 6th July. Our sincerest condolences to his relatives and friends.

(PAUSE)

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

It seems that the SARL web is having a problem with the acceptance and forwarding of news items for the bulletin and that may be why there is no news from clubs in this bulletin. We apologise for this inconvenience. We trust that the webmaster will soon get rid of this problem and that news will soon start to flow smoothly again.

In the news today:

SARL ANNOUNCES A REDUCTION IN RAE EXAM FEES

MORE FOR MEMBERS

ITCHEN VALLEY RADIO CLUB BURSARIES AWARDED

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more detail on these and other important and interesting news items.

SARL ANNOUNCES A REDUCTION IN RAE EXAM FEES

During the President's Net last Sunday SARL President Graham Hartlett announced a substantial reduction in the RAE fees. The reduction has been made possible as ICASA has agreed that in future the SARL, as the national body

for Amateur Radio, will be authorised to issue the RAE certificate. Effective immediately, the registration fee for both the class A and Class B examination will be an inclusive R300. There is an additional reduction for students under the age of 25 who can prove that they are full time students or learners. The fee will be R200. The fee will include one re-write should the candidate fail the first attempt at the examination, however no refunds will be considered.

The process for registering for the examination has also been streamlined. Candidates can download the necessary forms from the SARL website or request copies from the SARL administrator and after completion fax or mail the completed forms and required documentation to the SARL. It is important that candidates carefully follow the checklist on the RAE registration form to ensure that all the required documentation is submitted. Failing to do so may result in unnecessary delays.

The SARL is currently working with ICASA on combining the RAE certificate with the HAREC certificate as specified in the radio regulations. Once this has been finalised, candidates who pass the class A examination will receive a HAREC certificate which will be valid for application of an amateur radio license in CEPT countries and other countries which has contracted into the HAREC system. HAREC is the acronym for Harmonised Amateur Radio Examination certificate. This process may take a few weeks.

MORE FOR MEMBERS

Graham Hartlett also discussed the issue of more benefits for members. He said that the Council had accepted the principle that members should derive maximum benefit from their membership. As the National Body for Amateur Radio, a number of services must be available to all radio amateurs for which the SARL will in future charge an admin fee. He cited the example of the upgrade process from ZR to ZS. The process will be free for SARL members, but non-members will be charged an admin fee of R100. The SARL will also relook at the various services on the web and, where necessary, upgrade the website and increase the members only content.

He said that not all changes will be made immediately but will be an ongoing process over a period of time.

ITCHEN VALLEY RADIOCLUB BURSARIES AWARDED

The South African Amateur Radio Development Trust has awarded the three YARP Young People in Amateur Radio Programme bursaries sponsored by the UK Itchen Valley Radio Club. The successful candidates are: Bongani Mondlana, Nfumo Khoza and Suzette van Wyk. They will study for the class A examination and write in October. Congratulations to the three students, we wish them success in their studies.

BAND PLANS AND SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT

Due to the shortage of local news we include an item taken from WIA News

which is applicable to all radio amateurs world wide and which we may well take note of. (Read SARL where WIA appears in the text).

Amateur Self-Regulation.

Amateurs use a wide variety of different modes. Within one amateur band, activity can include CW, voice, satellite and EME activity, and ATV. The best way of avoiding clashes is to set aside different band segments for each of these activities, so that all amateurs can pursue their interests without interference.

Amateur band plans are voluntary agreements, often known as “Gentlemen s Agreements”. They are sponsored by the WIA, but they are for the benefit of all amateurs. Most amateurs, WIA members or not, abide by the band plans because it makes sense to give everyone a fair go.

Clashes still occur at times, and the usual reason is lack of awareness of the band plans. Most amateurs are willing to change frequency if the problem is explained to them politely.

Band plans should satisfy a number of conflicting criteria:

They should take local conditions into account, but they should be consistent with international usage.

They should encourage spectrum efficiency, but they should also ensure that all modes have their fair share of spectrum space.

They should take the popularity of each mode into account, while still providing enough spectrum space for less popular activities. For example, ATV requires far more bandwidth per operator than other modes; and activities such as EME are of major importance regardless of the number of stations involved.

Band plans must be flexible enough to adapt to changing needs, but they tend to lose support if they are changed too often. The aim must be to think ahead and to make sure that future options are not closed off.

On the VHF-UHF bands, three main groups are:

CW/SSB: the preferred modes for weak signal work.

FM: Not suitable for weak signal work and not compatible with SSB or CW. This category also includes digital modes such as packet, which usually use FM mode on the VHF bands.

ATV: Requires a very large bandwidth but has a very low power density, so it needs an exclusive interference-free band segment.

Calling Frequencies On the VHF bands, the band plans include calling frequencies. These frequencies are “meeting places” and should be used only to make initial contact before moving to another frequency. If you “hog” the calling frequency you will prevent others from making calls or hearing more distant stations that may appear on the frequency.

PROPAGATION CONDITIONS

Probably due to the web site problem and the fact that we could not contact our regular contributor, ZS6BZP, by telephone, Marten, ZS6ZY, acquired the information which follows for us.

At present the sun spot number is 12 with an associated sun flux figure of 71, which is evidence of very low sun activity. The geomagnetic conditions will be quiet to unsettled with sporadic active periods during the coming week.

Propagation graphs show that communication with Europe on 14 MHz may be successful between 09:00 and 17:00 UTC and sporadically on 21 MHz between 09:00 and 16:00 UTC.

To the Far East 7 MHz contacts may be successful between 02:00 and 18:00 UTC and on 21 MHz between 17:00 and 23:00 UTC. It is interesting that no data is shown for 14 MHz.

DIARY OF EVENTS

14 15 July IARU HF World Championship; 22 July Boland ARC 40 m Contest; 5 August SARL HF Phone contest; 15 August - Last day to submit synopsis of proposed papers for SA AMSAT Space Conference; 23 August - Class B RAE; 6 October - SA AMSAT Space Conference; 18 October - Class A RAE.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news stories of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news stories if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to the programme Amateur Radio Mirror International, on the air every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 695 kHz. For the web stream and echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentech sponsor the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

Today's South African Radio League news bulletin was compiled by Roger, ZR3RC, and transmitted by (your name and call sign)

Thank you for listening. 73

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